REMARKS

Claims 1 and 2 are pending in the present application. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Applicant is amending the specification to correct a typographical omission, and amending the abstract to delete a purported recitation of the title of the invention. The correct title of the invention is presented at the beginning of the application.

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,993,317 to Belsak, Jr. (hereinafter "the Belsak, Jr. patent") in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,973,087 to Fong (hereinafter "the Fong patent"). Applicant is traversing this rejection.

Claim 1 provides for a system for communications on a bi-directional medium. The system includes, *inter alia*, a first repeater, a second repeater, a third repeater and a fourth repeater, each of which is coupled to the medium. The first repeater and the second repeater communicate with each other on a first band for a transmission from the first repeater to the second repeater, and on a second band for a transmission from the second repeater to the first repeater. The third repeater and the fourth repeater communicate with each other on the second band for a transmission from the third repeater to the fourth repeater, and on the first band for a transmission from the fourth repeater to the third repeater.

The Belsak Jr. patent discloses a system in which repeaters are implemented on different conductors so that the distance between adjacent repeaters on any one conductor is greatly extended (col. 2, lines 40 – 44). For example, the Belsak, Jr. patent, with reference to FIG. 3, describes a power line L1 that comprises three separate phase lines P1, P2 and P3, with an arrangement of repeaters 71, 72, 73, 74, 75 and 76 distributed thereon (col. 6, lines 4 - 46). Repeater 71 is implemented on phase line P1 (col. 6, lines 46 – 47). Repeater 72 receives signals from receiver 71 via a wireless link 102,

and transmits signals S2 over phase line P2 (col. 6, lines 47 – 50). Signals are further communicated (a) from repeater 72 to repeater 73, via phase line P2, (b) from repeater 73 to repeater 74 via a wireless link 104, (c) from repeater 74 to repeater 75, via phase line P3, and (d) from repeater 75 to repeater 76, via a wireless link 106 (col. 6, lines 50 – 55). The Belsak, Jr. refers to this arrangement as "phase line hopping" (col. 6, line 57).

The Office Action suggests that FIG. 3 of the Belsak, Jr. patent discloses a first repeater, a second repeater, a third repeater and a fourth repeater coupled to a medium. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Whereas the Belsak, Jr. patent expressly teaches phase line hopping, wherein repeaters are implemented on different conductors, the repeaters are not coupled to the same medium. Therefore, the Belsak, Jr. patent does not disclose, but instead teaches away from, a first repeater, a second repeater, a third repeater and a fourth repeater, **each of which is coupled to the medium**, as recited in claim 1. Thus, the Belsak, Jr. patent cannot serve as a reference for a section 103(a) rejection of claim 1, either alone or in combination with another reference.

Nevertheless, the Office Action recognizes that the Belsak, Jr. patent does not specifically teach the use of frequency bands recited in claim 1, and so, the Office Action introduces the Fong patent.

The Fong patent discloses a system of repeaters that uses a sequence of frequencies to select a particular path through a network (col. 3, lines 50 – 58). Although the Fong et al. patent discloses a utilization of a plurality of frequency bands (col. 46, lines 10 – 27), the Fong et al. patent does not disclose that:

(a) **a first repeater and a second repeater** communicate with each other **on a first band** for a transmission from the first repeater to the second repeater, **and on a second band** for a transmission from the second repeater to the first repeater, and that

(b)**a third repeater and a fourth repeater** communicate with each other **on the second band** for a transmission from the third repeater to the fourth repeater, **and on the first band** for a transmission from the fourth repeater to the third repeater,

as recited in claim 1.

For the reasons provided above, Applicant submits that claim 1 is patentable over the cited combination of the Belsak, Jr. and Fong patents.

Claim 2 depends from claim 1. By virtue of this dependence, claim 2 is also patentable over the cited combination of the Belsak, Jr. and Fong patents.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the section 103(a) rejection of claims 1 and 2.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that all claims presented in this application patentably distinguish over the prior art. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests favorable consideration and that this application be passed to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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